

AWW ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

June 28, 2005

9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Black Bear Inn, Stillwater, ME

Council Members Present: Dean Bennett, John Boland, Jennifer Burns, Ric Denico, Roy Gardner, Don Hudson, Phyllis Jalbert, Cathy Johnson, Sarah Medina, Don Nicoll, John Richardson, John Rust, Bill Sylvester, Larry Totten, and Dick Walthers.

Council Members Absent: Dick Barringer, Jamie Fosburgh, Gary Pelletier, Kevin Slater, Jym St. Pierre

BPL Staff Present: Dave Soucy, Tim Hall, Bev Richardson, and Marilyn Tourtelotte.

Guests: Commissioner Patrick McGowan, John Picher, John Daigle, and Mark Turner

I. Welcome and Introductions

A. Dave Soucy welcomed John Rust as the newest member to the council.

B. **Council Membership.** Dave Soucy: As the two year terms will be up in August, the Department will select the new council in late August or shortly thereafter. Members were asked to E-mail Dave if interested in serving again.

II. Review of Minutes:

A. After spelling corrections the minutes were accepted. See Meeting Packet Attachment A.

III. 2003 Visitors Survey-Professor John Daigle

Professor John Daigle offered a presentation on research from the 2003 Visitor Survey. Following John's presentation the following comments were made:

D. Bennett: Concerns of how the survey was conducted. Not an accurate representation of the general public who visited the waterway. Concerns regarding only one person in a group completed the survey. Would you do the survey the same way if you do it again?

J. Daigle: Yes, not concerned with the methodology of the survey.

J. Rust: People were satisfied with their campsite in relation to vegetation but wanted more distance between cells?

J. Daigle: We do have the distance between the cells. In terms of their experience we found that the distance between cells was related to the behavior of the people camping nearby as much as not being able to see them.

S. Medina: If you had randomly selected from the registration cards then mailed the surveys what would a typical response rate be? 20 to 30%??

J. Daigle: Probably a little higher.

C. Johnson: Any way to factor in those who did not come because the Wilderness experience is not measuring up to, say Canada?

J Daigle: There are ways but it would be challenging.

D. Nicoll: Those who responded to too many people, was that at the campsite or on the water?

J. Daigle: Both questions were asked. 18% saw too many people at the campsite, 72% were OK with the campsite.

C. Johnson: Marilyn what is your practice of allowing people to stay multiple nights at one site?

M. Tourtelotte: The rule for years has always been that we can ask people to leave if we need the site for other groups, if they have been there too long.

P. Jalbert: Would you consider adding weather conditions to the survey?

J. Daigle: I think it should be considered.

T. Hall: John's report is available at the Northern Region Office.

IV. NOAA WEATHER STATION PROPOSAL-Mark Turner

Mark Turner, representing the National Weather Service (NOAA), offered a presentation on a proposal to replace the weather station at Churchill Dam with a new, automated *station (See Attachment 1)*. The new equipment will continue the 35 years of data and will give more helpful information to provide: data for water resource management, more accurate real time weather forecasting, better flood & drought forecasting.

Location needs: flat area with exposure of a 45° cone over the equipment.

Installation: uses an auger to put pole in ground about 4 ft. it extends above ground about 4 to 6 ft. Very low impact installation.

M. Tourtelotte: The proposal is to put the new equipment in a gravel pit between the Jaws and the Dam. It won't be visible from the waterway or campsites.

There was considerable discussion regarding the proposed weather station and its possible location.

Dave Soucy: For the purpose of our discussion here the issue before us is: whether it's appropriate to replace an existing structure in the restricted zone with a new structure that is also within the restricted zone as described by Mark. If there is no suitable alternative site that would maintain this 35 years of data, a location within the Restricted Zone would appear to be justified.

Following additional discussion, Dave asked Marilyn and Mark to look for alternative sites that would be outside the Restricted Zone, but would yield the same data under the NWS guidelines. Dave asked for volunteers to help Mark and Marilyn; Don Hudson and Roy Gardner both volunteered.

VISIT FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The Commissioner encouraged Council members to coordinate with the Bureau when they talk to Legislators regarding Waterway issues in their role as Advisory Council members.

The Department is working to help Legislative committees understand the forest practices we use and the management objectives of this administration.

The Commissioner offered thanks to everyone who has spoken to the Legislature in support of our budget.

Discussion followed as to how we can show the Legislators the need to maintain and increase the budget for the Department.

The Commissioner would like to hear what the members would like to work on in the future. E-mail the commissioner, Dave, Tim or Marilyn with your ideas.

V. River Update

Tim Hall reported on River Activities

- Use trend: 2004 shows the continued downward trend (See Meeting Packet Attachment B). This matches the data coming from the North Maine Woods and our informal data taken at Michaud Farm area. We are also seeing this trend through the State Park system.
- Expenditures: There were decreased expenditures in the AWW between 03 and 04 (by \$5,000). Salaries and benefits are up slightly. The Bureau continues to use Poland Springs and Loon accounts to supplement the General Fund. General fund allocations have decreased over the last couple of years due to administrative cuts. Tim reminded members that there is no separate appropriation for the AWW; funds are allocated as they are needed from the Bureau's one appropriation.
- 2004 Forest Operations: this reports shows 13 notifications for harvesting activities.
- Oversize Use summary: Shows that in 1995 there were seven "grandfathered" organizations. That has fallen off to only 4 organizations. We only issue about 8 permits a year.
- 2005 project planning: Minor projects: set aside money for repairs at Eagle Lake, Allagash Lake, Michaud Farm and Chamberlain bridge.

Marilyn:

Winter use:

- More snowmobiles than anglers.
- No snowshoers, mushers or cross country skiers observed. One person walked from Chamberlain to Churchill and one person walked from Ziegler to the Tramway and back.
- Parking lot had 8 vacancies at registration, with 7 vacancies for winter.
- Use was slightly higher than in 2004.
- Noted fewer fires built above the high water mark and fewer live limbs cut to mark holes.
- Volunteers assisted in winter registration, moving stock for new snowmobile bridge over Kellogg Brook and painting signs.
- Re-classed receptionist position at Chamberlain Bridge and Laborer position at Michaud Farms to Assistant Ranger.
- Full staff this year: copy in your packet.
- Johns Bridge: 4 parties of 2 accessed using the permits issued by the state. Three parties accessed illegally. They were issued courtesy warnings and given copies of the rules.
- Spring rains caused washouts through out the waterway. Telos Lake reached 10 ft., normal is 9 ft. with minor damage to Lock dam.
- Orion, who manages the land for Timberstar, is improving the roads around Churchill Dam. They are best we've seen is 6 years.

2005 Projects:

- Inspecting all campsites for improvement for brush, tables, fireplaces, potential plantings, and erosion. Also reviewing the need for multiple cells at the various locations.
- Soil tests for new outhouse holes to replace ones nearly full, especially on the river portion of the waterway.
- Remove the bunk house at Telos Dam.
- Staining camps and shops
- In the fall of 2004 the road to Indian Stream access was brushed back and an old ice house removed. We plan to re-route the lake end of the trail away from the stream shore, entering the lake at the same location and corduroying the trail.

Comments and Questions:

P. Jalbert: Where are you considering removing cells, lakes or river?

Marilyn: On the lakes.

J. Rust: With the sledding increase do you know which way their coming from or the access points their using?

Marilyn: Don't know the access points they are using. We do know that they are traveling from longer distances such as Millinocket, Kokadjo, Baxter, and even Canada.

C Johnson: Explain the Camp Drake renovations and would you consider moving it back so it's not visible from the water?

Marilyn: Camp Drake is used by the John Martin Scholarship student. It needs to be leveled with new underpinnings and needs a new roof. It is not visible from the water.

D. Nicoll: Can you account for the sharp drop in day use?

Tim Hall: North Maine Woods indicated that when Abol bridge was closed down, they noticed a significant drop in day use. The trend is down over all.

D. Bennett: Status on implementing a Day Use Permit?

D Soucy: We discussed it and don't feel there is a need for it at this point.

VI. Management Plan Modifications

D. Soucy: In April you received the Bureau's final draft. The plan is to take the final draft to a public meeting for an opportunity for the public to comment on our proposed changes. Dave asked for corrections and comments.

J Rust: Page 59 **2.3.I:** Should delete Taylor Camps now that the life?

L Totten: Page 43 a period is needed after John's Bridge before Winter.

Page 50 change Bruntland Brool to Brook.

Page 58 top of page Stream Channels and Background are overlaid.

Dave distributed a sheet (*See Attachment 2*) with two corrections regarding the Management Plan draft contained in the meeting packet (See Meeting Packet Attachment D). A copy of the

final plan with all of the corrections will be posted on the Internet before the public comment meeting.

VII. Lock Dam/Telos Dam Water Management Plan

D. Soucy: In introducing the topic, Dave explained that there are three factors driving this particular issue:

1. Paul Johnson, retired fishery biologist, has expressed concerns about maintaining water flow at Martin Stream (downstream from Lock Dam);
2. There is a need to perform some temporary repairs at both Telos and Lock Dams; and
3. In the Memorandum of Agreement with the National Park Service, and in our own management planning commitment, we have an obligation to review the continuation of dams and the process established for reviewing repairs to dams.

John Picher presented a proposal for using aluminum stop logs at Telos Dam. A handout (*See Attachment 3*) was also distributed.

Questions and Comments:

D Soucy: Using the stop logs make the dam self regulating. Also enable us to more easily maintain a higher water level.

M. Tourtelotte called our attention to Meeting Packet Attachment C, which is the proposed management plan for maintaining water levels.

R. Denico: Has formulated a better way to manage the rate the flow changes and would help keep a better handle on it. Would like to meet and discuss the idea.

D Soucy: Tim will schedule a meeting with Ric, Marilyn, and John Picher

D. Soucy: What are some of the issues to address if we are thinking of doing a study of Lock & Telos dam and whether they should be removed? The issues are not just about the Allagash. This would affect the East Branch, Matagamon, Webster Stream, the Penobscot Indian Nation, PRC, Baxter Park, camp owners, to name a few. We must include these people directly and invite them to be co equal partners to examine this issue.

C. Johnson: Talked to these people and they agree they all should be involved. A document was distributed, prepared by Cathy, of the issues mentioned above (*See Attachment 4*).

D. Walthers: The Allagash is the largest watershed in the U S for brook trout, a major resource to be protected. This study should include what impacts if the dams were to be removed, positive or negative on this fishery. Need a comprehensive study and evaluation before we proceed.

L. Totten: Must go ahead and do the repairs to the dam while we decide what we're going to do long term. Can't let it wash out.

D. Soucy: This is going to be a large project and take a lot of time. E-mail me if you are interested and I will appoint a small scoping group initially to begin this process. This group will

make some contacts and carefully, delicately and diplomatically try to open up the lines of communication.

We will defer until the next meeting a further discussion on the stop log plan.

VII. Henderson Brook Bridge

D. Soucy: Introduced Jerry Bley, who will help facilitate discussions on the issue of Henderson Brook Bridge (reconstruction or removal). Dave outlined the issues at hand in repairing/reconstructing the bridge, and the issues surrounding removal of the bridge.

There was discussion about what repairs are needed, if the bridge is still considered a temporary bridge, and what effect removal of the bridge would have.

Dave has asked six members of the council to serve on a committee to address these issues. Hope to have a first report at the next meeting.

VIII. Allagash Ambassadors

Tim Hall gave a brief summary of the volunteer programs we have in the Bureau and the Waterway, as well as proposed criteria for the Allagash Ambassador program (See meeting packet Attachment E). We have recognized two ambassadors to date: Gil Gilpatrick and Gary Pelletier.

IX. Taylor Camps

Dave Soucy presented a summary of the reconstruction of the Taylor camps and the reasons for moving ahead with the reconstruction despite the controversy surrounding it. Dave stressed that the project demonstrates to the people who were supportive of it that we would and will fulfill our commitments under the River Drivers Agreement.

X. Winter Use.

D. Soucy discussed the issues and the progress made surrounding the motorized and non motorized access points on the Allagash. No consensus has been reached yet. This is a complex issue and will require much more discussion and consultation with both sides. A handout was distributed (*See Attachment 5*).

Discussion followed. Dave Soucy asked everyone to keep an open mind on the issue and stated that it would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Closing

Potential meeting dates: August 25th, September 22nd, and December 14th. Tim Hall will notify everyone once the next meeting date is confirmed.

Meeting adjourned 3:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Beverly Richardson